

For Immediate Release

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Governor Musgrove: Mississippi Innovators Strengthening State

(Jackson, MS) – Governor Ronnie Musgrove said community-based leadership organizations play a key role in strengthening Mississippi and its ability to make the most of its potential. Two organizations, The Montgomery Institute and the Mississippi Center for Community and Civic Engagement, were recognized at last week's annual meeting of the Southern Growth Policies Board as "innovative programs in the South that are implementing model approaches to improve the quality of life in our region."

"These groups focus on the qualities that build communities, and the skills necessary to make the most of those qualities," Musgrove said. "Their contributions to our communities are a vital component of our growth statewide."

The Montgomery Institute, based in Meridian, serves East Mississippi and West Alabama. Named in honor of former Congressman G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery, the Institute focuses on the development of leadership skills, strategic thinking and infrastructure.

The Mississippi Center for Community and Civic Engagement operates from the University of Southern Mississippi. It works to promote civic engagement, facilitate diverse partnerships, strengthen educational experiences, support tutoring and mentoring programs, and assist social institutions and educational partnerships.

The meeting of the Southern Growth Policies Board focused on "new models for southern leadership." In its report, "Reinventing the Wheel," the SGPB noted that "at the core of the movement towards new leadership models is an emerging awareness that quality of life issues are inseparable from economic development issues. The quantity and quality of a community's civic engagement and social capital directly impact both quality of life and economic opportunity."

Musgrove, who oversaw the creation of the report, ended his term as chairman of the SGPB at last week's meeting.

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